UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF CONCORD IN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, NAVRONGO.

FAUSTINA ANE

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PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF CONCORD IN ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, NAVRONGO

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A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS, FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF EDUCATION (TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE) DEGREE.

DECEMBER, 2017

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, FAUSTINA ANE, declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for any other degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE…………………………………….

DATE……………………………………………….

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. REBECCA AKPANGLO- NARTEY

SIGNATURE……………………………………

DATE……………………………………………

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DEDICATION

I specially dedicate this study to my precious parents Mr and Mrs Clement Abagye Ane, my lovely siblings and also Francis Bukari Kombat for all their support, love and for being my source of inspiration.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate the challenges associated with the use of concord in English language among the pupils of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School. Another objective is to propose an appropriate teaching and techniques to overcome such problems. Another objective is to use the findings of the study to improve the performance of pupils in the use of concord. The researcher adopted qualitative research design method. Random sampling was used to select pupils and teachers. For the test, 30 pupils from form two were picked to write the test while the interview for both teachers were randomly picked. The researcher adopted test, interviews, and observation for data collection. The findings were that errors were committed on the three types of concord that were discussed but most of the errors were committed on grammatical concord. Also another cause of concord errors among the pupils of O.L.L. JHS is over generalisation of rules. The recommendations are learners should be regular at school, and to make sure that English as a medium of communication is used both in the classroom and on the school premises. Finally teachers should teach the pupils the appropriate strategies which would facilitate language learning as their first language can play a vital role in learning a second language. Provision of textbooks should be provided to pupils to enhance effective teaching and learning of concord in the school. If all the recommendations are considered, teaching and learning of concord would be enjoyable.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

The present study analyses concord problems among learners of Our Lady of Lourdes JHS. The chapter one presents the introduction to this research. It includes a discussion of the background of the study, brief background history of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School research site, statement of the problem, diagnosis of the problem, the purpose of the study and objectives of the study. The chapter also introduces the research questions that guide the study, significance of the study and what limitations and delimitations there are to the study. The chapter concludes with the organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Ghana is a multilingual nation but English language has been adopted and adapted to assume the status of an official language in Ghana. English is the language of Government, Education, business, the media and indeed all official transactions are carried out with the English language.

For a Ghanaian child, English language is the medium of instruction at school from class four (4). That success in education at all levels of the educational ladder depends to a very large extent on the individual's proficiency in the English language. It is for this and other reasons that English language is a major subject of study in Ghanaian schools.

English is also the most widely used language for international communications and also the dominant figure of the internet. It is a fact that one's success in any form of education and training generally, depends on his/her ability to understand and use English language efficiently and effectively. English language is a

service language in Ghana. It is therefore obligatory for all Ghanaian students to learn and speak English language effectively.

Being the lingua franca, English language has always been a core subject. Almost all the subjects studied, and examinations taken in our schools are done in English language. A good grade in English Language helps every individual student in Ghana to further his/her education in any second cycle and tertiary institution. A good pass indeed lies in the realm of a good understanding of the concept of concord and an in-depth knowledge of English grammar on the part of students. Palmer (1990) believes that grammar is the central part of a language and that grammar is very important to any literate person. Palmer's view is that the grammar of every language is crucial to the learner of that particular language just as the English language is very crucial to learners.

The ability to present or write any English material that is devoid of concord error is central to the use of English language. As a teacher of English language my interactions with my pupils previously and with my colleague teachers at school revealed to me that the use of concord is problematic right from the primary school to the Junior High School level. The results of Basic Education Certificate Examination over the years show that pupils in Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School do not perform well in the English language. For example in the 2016 results, the best grade was Grade four attained by two candidates. This was followed by grade five attained by nine candidates and then grade six was obtained by seven pupils, grade seven obtained by one student and grade eight by one pupil.

The poor performance of the pupils of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School stems from the fact that there is a saying that practice makes perfection is lost in them.

In English language sentences, the subject and the verb can agree in different ways and that makes it difficult for students to keep track of the different rules of concord. The subject controls the verb or predicator which has to have the same grammatical person and numbers features as the subject. If the learners of English are not guided to grasp the basic principles of how the language operates then they would not be able to use English the way it should be used. Grammar is one of the central parts of the learning of language which needs to be given the necessary attention.

One main aspect of grammar which poseses a lot of problems to pupils is concord. The researcher's experience through interactions with pupils in and outside the classroom, their essay scripts and grammar exercises, indicate that pupils do not understand the concept of concord. Colleague teachers reveal that the teaching and learning of concord is a problem at all levels of education. Deviating from the rules of concord brings us negative response from native and non-native speakers and hearers alike. It is for this reason that the classroom teachers need to know the errors pupils make and why they make them, to enable them devise appropriate strategies to eliminate such errors. Moreover the Chief Examiners Report in 2013 indicates that WAEC is unhappy with students' previous performance of pupils in the English Language exams is worrying. The report observes that it could be impossible for any candidate to do well in the examination if English language which is a medium of instruction if not mastered.

1.2 Brief History of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School

Our Lady of Lourdes was built in 1957 by the Missionaries of Africa who brought Christianity to Navrongo. At the beginning it was a middle school and after a great number of years, it was turned into a Junior Secondary School which was a

mixed school, later it was turned into a girls' Junior High School. At the moment it has a Senior High School which can be located at Gaani at the outskirts of Navrongo.

Our Lady of Lourdes can be located at the Kasena Nankana Municipal in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The native language of the people is Kasem and their occupation is farming and trading. Our Lady of Lourdes JHS has a total enrolment of seventy-one (71) girls. Each class has about 20-35 pupils ranging from age 12-15 years. The school has nine (9) teachers including the headmistress: Four (4) are males and five (5) are females.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The poor performance of pupils all over the world in English language is a serious problem and this has become an issue of serious concern to all educational stakeholders. Pupils of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School have difficulties using all types of subject verb agreement both in their speech and also in their writing but there is no empirical evidence from research to confirm this observation. It is important for the problem to be investigated with empirical data in order to document the problem, make it known to stakeholders and find solutions.

1.4 Diagnosis of the Problem

The problem was diagnosed in the year 2O15 through observation and from pupils' essays marked, and test items such as fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate verb. The poor usage of concord is very evident in pupils oral conversation with colleagues, friends, and teachers.

1.5 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the problems associated with the use of concord in English language among JHS two pupils. It is also to assist pupils of Our

Lady of Lourdes Junior High School at Navrongo to improve upon their performance in English language, especially with the use of concord.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The Objectives Of the study are as follow:

- Identify problems or challenges associated with the usage of concord in English language among Junior High School pupils.

- Propose strategies or appropriate teaching techniques to over-come such problems.

- Use the finding of the study to make the necessary recommendation to appropriate authorities as to how to improve the performance of pupils in the use of concord

1.7 Research Questions

1. What challenges do pupils face in their usage of concord in the English language?

2. What appropriate teaching strategies and techniques can overcome the problem?

3. What recommendations are appropriate for the educational authority to improve upon the usage of concord in English language?

1.8 Significance of the Study

The current study contributes to the existing literature on the efforts that have been made by scholars to promote acquisition of proficiency in English language by second language learners. The study evaluates the pupils' knowledge of the rules of concord and their application of those rules in their language performance. The analysis of the concord errors exposes the common cause(s) of concord errors that

pupils make, which may be intralingual or interlingual in nature. This knowledge need to help the language teachers and textbook writers to know the areas they should emphasize in this aspect of grammar as well as the best teaching methods to adopt in order to help pupils overcome their difficulties.

It is hoped that the findings of the work would serve as a useful guide for the formulation of improved English curriculum by curriculum designers. The researcher believes, therefore, that the findings of this study will constitute an important resource material for the English language teachers, the curriculum planners, the textbook designers, pupils, and future researchers.

1.9 Limitations

One limitation that this study faced was absenteeism on the part of participants. Due to that, only two thirds of the class took part in the study. Another fall back of the study was that due to co-curricular activities which took much of the time, administering the test items took   a long time to achieve. This made it difficult to smoothly carry out the test items.

1.10. Delimitations

English Language has several aspects such as Literature, Composition, Reading Comprehension and Grammar. The researcher's desire was to investigate one aspect of grammar, which is concord. There are many Junior High Schools in the circuit, but due to financial constraints the research was limited to Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School.

1.11 Organization of the study

The research report consists of five (5) chapters. Chapter one contains introduction, background of the study, brief history of the study school, statement of

the problem, diagnose of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. Other areas include significance, limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter two highlights the review of related literature on the topic referring to authorities' views and the views of the current researcher on the problem while chapter three gives an overview of the methodology. It covers introduction, research design, data sources, population, sample and sampling procedure, method of data analysis, and research instrument. Chapter four (4) deals with presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data and Chapter five (5) discusses the summary of the findings, recommendations and conclusions

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the meaning of concord, types of concord, causes of concord errors, and common concord errors learners commit are discussed. The first part discusses the concept of concord with an explanation of their types. The second part focuses on review of some related studies on the use of concord by students. Literature review according to Kwabia (2006:98) "is the process of accessing literature information from books, articles and archives sources on a particular subject. He explains that it is a statement that explains inter-relations in a phenomenon. Kwabia believes it can be an idea or knowledge derived from an existing one and serves as a guide for doing fieldwork. Literature brings to light when or where an event occurred, what caused it or how it occurred; it redefines the researchers' objective and re-directs the data collection process.

2.1 Concord

Concord is a grammatical agreement between two words in a sentence. Concord happens when a word changes depending on the words to which it relates. Leech and Svartuik (1994) state that for an English sentence to be correct and meaningful, its constituent parts must be in perfect agreement. Their view on concord is not different from Wiredu (1999) who explains that the term concord in grammar is used to refer to the agreement relations which exist between two grammatical units so that when one unit displays a particular feature the other unit also does same. This explains the principle that one grammatical unit in a sentence is influenced by the feature of a different unit within the same sentence. Also, Drennan (2003) supports

Blake (1988) by describing concord as an agreement between words in gender, number and person.

Penston (2005) defines concord as an agreement that exists between the verb and subject in person (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and number (singular and plural). Penston's definition is similar to that of Quirk and Greenbaum (2012) who define concord as agreement in relationship between two grammatical units. Concord in broad terms is the agreement between the subjects and the verbs as well as other elements of the clause structure.

Concord is an agreement between a subject and a verb, but it goes beyond a mere subject verb agreement. The word concord means an agreement between words, especially with regard to their number.

There are different types of concord in the English Language. Many scholars have analyzed concord and put them into various groups that exist between the words of a sentence. Estling – Vannestal (2007) says that the subject and the verb are the two most important items in the sentence. According to her concord is classified into four different types thus; grammatical, notional, proximity and distance concord.

2.2 Types of concord

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (2012) English concord has been divided into three: grammatical concord, notional concord and proximity concord.

2.2.1. Grammatical concord

The grammatical concord is also known as subject verb agreement or concord. This is an agreement between subject and verb. The subject and the verb have to agree grammatically and the phenomenon is called subject-verb concord.

Estling-Vannetsal (2007) states that, grammatical concord is when the verb and the subject belong together. Similarly, Wood (2010) states that the verb is considered to be the heart of the sentence and it has to take the same grammatical form as its controlled the subject. Kirkpatrick (2013) classifies grammatical concord as verb agreement. According to her verb agreement is also known as concord and refers to the fact that a verb must agree with the appropriate subject in number.

This is an implication that singular subject requires a singular verb and a plural subject requires a plural verb.

2.2.2. Notional concord

Quirk and Greenbaum (1985) assert that notional concord is agreement of verb with its subject according to the idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker for that idea. This implies that notional concord refers to the agreement between subject and verb not based on number and person, but on the speaker's perception. Therefore the speaker chooses a singular or plural verb based on his or her own idea about number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker of the idea. Group or collective nouns such as team, crowd, audience, family, public, committee army, government, congregation and others fall into this category.

According to Quirk and Greenbaum, collective nouns notionally are plural but grammatically singular. Although, singular and plural verbs are more or less interchangeable in these contexts, the choice is based on whether the group is being considered as a single undivided body or as a collection of individuals. It depends on the context in which the collective nouns are used in a sentence. That will determine whether to use a singular verb or plural.

Notional concord is the agreement of verbs with their subjects and pronouns with their antecedent nouns on the basis of meaning rather than grammatical form. This

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implies that notional concord depends on the speaker's idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker. Notional concord is focusing on the meaning of the whole entity thus (Crystal, 2004)

Parrot (2000) states that plural nouns lacking the inflection (-s) such as a collective noun is considered singular when it refers to a group. In this case the noun takes a singular verb. If the words 'public' and 'committee' are subjects in sentences, it may refer to groups and will therefore be treated as singular. This implies that the group is considered as a single undivided body. On the other hand, when a collective noun is used to refer to the individual members of a group, the noun is treated as plural. In some instances, the subjects 'staff' and 'audience' will be treated as plural when they refer to the individual members of the group.

2.2.3 Proximity concord

According to Wiredu (1999), proximity concord refers to the agreement between the verb and its subject based not on 'notion' but on the fact that there is a nominal group which is immediately close to the verb. Concord of proximity does not, however, agree with the real subject in the closest noun and the numeral of that specific noun, Crystal (2004). That is, it denotes agreement of the verb with a noun or pronoun that closely precedes it in preference to agreement with the head of the noun phrase. For instance, four singular nouns joined by (either or, neither nor, not but, and, or) take a singular verb, and if the subjects are plural, then the verbs must also be plural.

2.2.4 Causes of concord errors

According to Bangbose (1976) think that irregular patterns of the English Language as one of the major cause of concord errors among learners of English.

Olukpe (1981) is of the view that concord incongruity is the most common grammatical error that mars ones effort in writing effectively. He stresses that mistakes in agreement are caused by inconsistency in the use of subject and verb of a sentence, pronoun and its antecedent, shifts from one tense to the other, shifts from active to passive voice.

Olukpe (1981) concludes by saying that since concord is essential in producing standard English sentences, it is important that one should learn how to use number, person, gender tense and voice consistently. His opinion highlights the fact that a well contructed sentence must obey the rules of concord.

Connor and Kaplan (1987) argue that concord errors occur in language usage because of the following reasons learners trying to translate from the first language, lack of familiarity with new rhetorical structures and the organization of ideas, trying out what they assume is a legitimate structure of the target language which may be hindered by insufficient knowledge of correct usage, native language interference from developmental stage of interlanguage or from non-standard elements in spoken dialects, overgeneralization of the rules for stylistics features when acquiring new discourse structures, and learners are often unsure of what they want to express.

According to Myles (2002) the causes of concord errors have been grouped into two, social and cognitive factors. He explains that learners in the second language may continue to exhibit errors in their writing for the following social reasons, negative attitude towards the target language, continued lack of progress the second language, a wide social and psychological distance between the target culture, and lack integrative and instrument motivation for learning. He also states that learners equally exhibit errors for these cognitive reasons difficulty in acquiring academic and discourse style, lack of coherence in organizing information both at the sentence and

text level, the complex process of writing in a second language, and language transfer due to learners lack of the necessary information in the second language or the intentional capacity to activate the appropriate second language routine.

2.3. Subject

The subject is the doer of an action in a sentence. The subject of the sentence can be overt or covert- implied and is what performs the action. It is normally made up of a noun or noun group or pronoun and even a clause- a noun clause about which the predicate comments. Sometimes, the subject can be a non-human or inanimate or a concept which performs the action. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) call such non-human subjects "actors".

There are basically three types of subjects in English grammar, simple subject implied, and compound. Simple subject normally has a lexical or single word while the compound subject on the other hand is made up of two or more nouns which are joined by the coordination conjunctions and sometimes correlative conjunctions. Third type of subject is the implied subject which is often "you" which is intrinsic or implicit, and can only be interpreted.

2.4. The Verb

The verb group can consist of only lexical word or more. The verb group in the sentence controls the sentence. Whenever we have more than one auxiliary in a verb group the first auxiliary has a special function. It is the operator of the entire sentence. Downing and Locke (2006) call the verb group the operators. The operator also function to help in the finiteness of a verbal group

2.5. Sources of student concord problems

Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) believe that teachers have difficulties teaching concord especially teachers who are non-native speakers. Because they are non-speakers, they are not able to teach it effectively in the classroom. Then the end up confusing the pupils as to how to apply the rules when writing or speaking.

Woods (1999) points out that the various approaches teachers use to teach is the beginning of concord errors among the students. This problem arises since many teachers are not competent in teaching concord.

On the other hand, Sakyi-Baidoo (2003) asserts that there are rules governing the way grammatical items are put together. Violation of these rules makes sentences construction ungrammatical. He listed nouns which are plural in form but singular in meaning and generally take a singular verb. The most common of these are 'news', 'linguistics', 'physics'; collective nouns which take singular verbs when the clause is considered as a unit, and plural verbs when the members of the class are considered individually; plural numbers which take singular verbs when they are in phrases to indicate a sum or a unit; indefinite pronouns such as anybody, each, either, everybody, neither, nobody, no one, and somebody, which generally require singular verbs. When the subject is a relative pronoun, the verb agrees with the antecedent of pronoun. In addition, when two or more singular subjects are connected by "and" the plural form of the verb is required. Also when two or more singular subjects are connected by "or", "nor", and "but" a singular form of the verb is required. Finally if one of the two subjects is connected by "or", nor", or but'', one is singular and the other is plural, then the verb agrees in number with the nearer one.

Both Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) and Sakyi-Baidoo(2003) hold the same view on the possible areas where students' concord problems arise. They attribute the

problems to inability of learners to grasp the rules in the various concord types and they commit a lot of errors as a result of this problem. Downing A, Locke P. (2006:43) say that "subjects determine concord in number (singular or plural) and person with the verb. Concord is manifested only in those verb forms that show inflectional contrast".

2.6 The Concept of Error

The word error means a deviation from accuracy or correctness. In language, an error is a deviation from standard language norm in grammar, syntax, pronunciation and punctuation. Corder (1974: 260) defines error as "the use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning". One can define error in English use as a form of English which is unacceptable in a particular speech community, representing deviation from the standard which is taught in that community. For example, British and American standard varieties of English differ.

Richard (1971) believes an error is not just the outcome of carelessness or forgetfulness but an error is characterized by systematic deviancy. Corder (1974) distinguishes between performance errors which are once off violations of grammatical conventions and competence errors which are consistent in an individual's speech or writing and indicate an internalized system different from that of a target language. In other words, the individual does not know how to use the correct form. Headbloom (1979) shares this view and comments that errors are goof or deviant productions; they are a systematic deviation from the target language by a non-native speaker. Ellis, R. (1985) agrees with Headbloom's argument that language errors are peculiar to second language learners. Hence, he defines errors as deviation

from the target language by a non-native speaker. He added that these errors are committed out of socio-linguistic and socio-culture factors. Headbloom (1979) concludes that given the intralingual complexities of the English language; it is highly impossible for the learner and user not to be caught in the maze of grammatical errors.

Meare (1980) focuses on improper use of vocabulary as a "source of error". He states that vocabulary is a neglected aspect of language learning. This neglect, he explains, gives rise to two major errors in the writing of the users of English as a second language. These are errors by contextual meaning and spelling errors.

Baugh and Cable (1983) maintain that English spelling is as difficult as it is erratic, not only for second language learners but also for those whose native language it is. They draw attention to the inconsistency of English spelling and say that one cannot tell how to spell an English word by its pronunciation and how to pronounce it by its spelling. I agree with Baugh and Cables because it is clear that pronunciation is quite unreliable as a clue to spelling and vice versa. Jowit (1991) illustrate this with words like advice and advise; border and boarder; cease and seize; match and March, stationery and stationary and a host of others as some of the words second language learners are likely to misspell.

Connor and Kaplan (1987) explain that errors occur in language usage because of the following reasons: learners trying to translate from the first language; lack of familiarity with new rhetorical structures and the organization of ideas; trying out what they assume is a legitimate structure of the target language which are being learned.

Headbloom' and Ellis' definition point out that, errors are exclusive to second language learners. Jowits (1991) also declare that errors are caused by wrong learning. There are some errors which are caused by the influence of the native language of the

learners of English language. Adejare (1996) sees the learner of English as a second language as prone to errors, both in speech and in writing. In the same vein, Aiyewumi (2001:42) describes errors in language learning as 'those odd items that are not evidence of carelessness or of unwillingness but of growing pains and desire to learn' .To him, errors are inevitable in language learning. In addition, Richard and Schmidt (2002) define error as the use of language in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as faulty or incomplete learning. Myles (2002) observes that students generally produce texts that contain varying degrees of grammatical and rhetorical errors when they write a second language. He asserts that the more content-rich and creative the text, the greater the possibility there is for errors at the morphosyntactic level depending on the proficiency level of the second language learner. A learner gains proficiency in a language if such a learner is adequately exposed to the basics of the language; and if he makes conscious effort to apply the basics correctly.

Myles (2002) identifies both social and cognitive factors as sources of errors in second language learning. He explains that learners in the second language may continue to exhibit errors in their writing for the following social reasons: negative attitude towards the target language; continued lack of progress in the second language; a wide social and psychological distance between them and the target culture; and lack of integrative and instrument motivation for learning. The above submission exposes interlingual and intralingual problems as the key sources of errors in English language learning.

Eyisi (2006) agrees that the interference of the first language with the second language is a factor capable of generating errors. To her, the errors become diverse because students study the target language against the background of their mother

tongue in which they have attained a reasonable degree of competence. Eyisi (2006) again contend that poor teaching engenders grammatical error. She points out that most teachers of English are also second language learners and as a result, might not have achieved the necessary proficiency and are therefore, prone to errors. In a situation like this, there is bound to be negative transference to the learners

I am of the opinion that the irregular forms inherent in the grammatical pattern of English language may be the source of some errors of learners, the pupils may be ignorant of rule restrictions and may not remember that, there are several exceptions in the application of rules. In some cases, there is incomplete application of rules and this could result in erroneous usage. Obi (2009) also states that faulty categorization of the lexis and structure of English may make learners commit grammatical errors. Also an obsession to eliminate grammatical errors in speech and writing may ironically produce errors because it could result in what I may term 'hyper correction'.

Brown (2007) defines error as noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter language competence of the learner. Also, Myles (2007) notes that errors are something that might happen from time to time until the second language learner internalizes the language entirely. He defines an error as a derailment in the speech or writing of a second language learner by the use of inappropriate words and language structures. Myles also explains that a second language teacher can only assess the learners' ability from the range or type of errors they make.

Errors indicate poor knowledge of the code of a language (Obi, 2009). Obi (2009:27) defines errors as 'breaches of the code of a language'. He states that errors are deviant structures or unacceptable utterances which are a sign of 'imperfect

knowledge' of the linguistic code. To Obi, therefore, errors are committed by those who are not grounded in the structure of a language. Similarly, Crystal (2009) believes that the concept of error presupposes that a correct and established form already exists on the other hand, but another form that is considered wrong and unacceptable is used or is in use. Crystal presents the concept of error from several angles: 'speaker's errors and slips of the tongue' such as addition, replacement and deletion of phonemes and morphemes; error of production and 'perception', 'error in the context of essay-marking' and error analysis.

The concept of error by scholars like, Corder, Myles, Headbloom, Ellis and their likes that errors are only associated to second language learners may not be entirely true. There is evidence that first language users of language also commit errors. I think what they failed to distinguish were oral errors and written errors. There are some first language users who can only communicate orally and will make a lot of errors in spelling and punctuation when writing; we can then describe such 'error' as slip of tongue or mistakes or goofs.

2.7 Sources of Concord Errors

A lot of sources of concord errors have been introduced by some researchers. I will like to group the sources of errors under two umbrellas: first language and English language structural difference and pedagogical problems. Researchers like Yule (2010) and Myles (2008) are of the opinion that first language is a major cause of grammatical errors learners of second language commit. While researchers like Chih (2013), Crystal (2002) and Hourani (2008) added method of teaching as a source of concord errors committed by second language learners. Furthermore, Bakuuro (2015) states mother tongue influence affects learners in some aspect of concord due to the syntactic difference between the languages. he added that Subject-verb

agreement and students unable to identify the headwords of complex noun phrases as a greater challenge to students.

2.7.1 English language structure

The differences that exist between learners' native language and English language are sometimes the source of concord errors among learners of English as a second language. Learners overgeneralise the concord rules, complexity of the English language itself and fossilisation by learners contribute to learners errors in concord.

2.7.1.1 Complexity of the English language

Onuigbo (2005) explains that errors of grammatical concord can stem from inherent irregular patterns in the grammar of the English language. He makes singular reference to nouns and observes that some language users find it difficult to associate the irregular nouns with the proper verb forms. Apart from the problem with the irregular nouns, greater difficulties may be experienced with the nouns that end in plural markers even when they are used as singular nouns. He explains that such words as alms, gallows, headquarters, means, will always select a singular verb even though they end apparently in plural markers. The above statement calls for adequate attention for the teaching of concord to students. Special attention should be paid to irregular nouns and their matching verbs.

2.7.1.2 Fossilisation

Sometimes a learner's grammatical development appears to have stopped at a certain level and recurring errors of both grammar and pronunciation have become permanent features of a learner's speech .This is referred to as fossilisation.(Hourani,2008). Littlewood (1994) stresses that fossilisation is most

likely to occur when a learner realises subconsciously that the error does not hinder him in satisfying his communicative needs at the functional level or social level. This is what Gass and Selinker (2001: 16) referred to as a "stage short of success". They further state that it is the stage when development ceases and even serious conscious efforts to change may be impossible. And even if there might be some brief changes, those would just not take the learner anywhere as the learners always backslides to the stable state. Spada and Lightbrown (1993:72) add that 'this lack of change happens even after extended to or instruction in the target language'. Brown (1994) indicates that this could be a problem even with those who have otherwise learned the language quite well.

2.7.2 Pedagogical Problems

Some teachers of the English language lack the appropriate methodology in teaching certain topics in English language especially concord. At times teachers also lack the knowledge rule restrictions and at time do not apply the rules of concord completely.

2.7.2.1 Method of Teaching

According to Tsadidey (1996:7) "some teachers resort to the translation approach and by so doing make the mistake of teaching English in the child's Ghanaian Language. Such an approach has harmful effects on the learner which may not manifest until he or she is old and the effect is difficult to combat. It does not mean that in teaching English, we should never resort to the use of the first Language. First language can be used in explaining meaning of words which may be difficult for learners to understand when the target language is use in explaining it. Again first language can be employed in explaining complex ideas and complex grammar points

because it helps learners to understand more rapidly. But a situation where the first language is used as the only medium of instruction in teaching a second is problematic."

2.7.2.2 Incomplete Application of Rules

This arises when the participants fail to fully develop a certain structure required to produce acceptable sentences. It involves learners failing to learn more complex types of structures since they think they can succeed effective communication by using relatively simple rules.

2.7.2.3 Ignorance of rule restrictions

It is a type of generalisation or transfer which occurs as a result of failure to observe the restrictions or existing structures. It involves making use of rules that the learners acquired earlier in new contexts where they do not apply.

Errors indicate poor knowledge of the code of a language. Myles (1974) observes that students generally produce texts that contain varying degrees of grammatical and rhetorical errors when they write a second language. He asserts that the more content-rich and creative the text, the greater the possibility there is for errors at the morph syntactic level depending on the proficiency level of the second language learner. A learner gains proficiency in a language if such a learner is adequately exposed to the rudiments of the language; and if he makes conscious effort to apply the rudiments correctly. Perhaps, this informs Jowits (1991) declaration that errors are caused by wrong learning.

Taylor (1976) identifies six major sources of grammatical errors. He calls them immediate cause of deviance. They are: General muscular activities, L1 Habits, Teaching Methods, Psychological States, Style of Course Materials, and Introduction

of Written Language. Taylor's view of the sources of error is quite elaborate. It embraces psychological, physiological, linguistic and pedagogical issues. However, he says that all the factors need not be present for errors to occur in language learning.

2.7.3 The First Language Problem

First language is also known as the mother tongue .This is a language a child learned from the parents at home .Children growing up in the home can have more than one mother tongue or native language.

2.7.3.1 Language Transfer

Transfer is the effect of one language on the learning of another. Positive transfer occurs when both the native language and English have the same form or linguistic feature .It makes learning easier and does not result in errors. Negative transfer or 'interference' is the use of a native language pattern or rule that leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language.

Littlewood (1984) also posit that in transfer, the learner uses his previous mother tongue experience as a means of organising the second language data. Ellis (1994) believes that transfer takes place whenever habits of the native language differ from those of the target language. This types of error mostly happens in the beginning stages of learning other languages, (Mbau and Muhsin 2014). The huge difference between the students native language and the target language in language aspects like morphology, syntax, and semantics makes the target language, English in particular, difficult to learn, (Mbau and Muhsin, 2014).

2.8 Rules of concord

Whenever a subject and a verb of a sentence do not agree, the sentence is ungrammatical. We therefore speak of errors in agreement or faulty agreement. To avoid this we must abide by the rules of concord.

According to Mudambadithaya (2002) concord has thirteen (13) rules. Some of the rules according to him are that a verb must agree with its subject in number or person, a singular verb should follow a singular subject, and a plural verb should go with a plural subject. The second rule states that singular subject followed by such words such as with, together with, as well as, accompanied by, take singular verbs. The third rule says, indefinite pronouns such as, everyone, no one, everybody, nobody, somebody, take singular verbs when they are in the subject position. The fourth rule says when two or more subjects are joined by 'and' and refer to the same person or thing, the verb must be in the singular form. However compound subjects referring to two different people or things take plural verbs.

Another rule says when two subjects (a compound subject) refer to the same thing or is thought of as a single idea or unit, a singular verb is used.
Furthermore, If subjects differ in number or person (one subject is in the singular and the other is in plural), the verb agrees with the subject (noun) nearer to it.
A collective noun takes a singular verb when emphasis is placed on the individual members of the group, that is, the individual members of the group are acting separately. This type of concord rule is knows as notional concord. This is because it is based on notion and perception. These words 'together' and 'separately' are used to indicate whether the collective nouns are considered as single item or separate items. This is another rule of concord.

2.9 Common Errors in Concord

Learners of English as a second language often commit error in subject-verb agreement. In addition that most learners have problems in writing grammatical correct subject-verb agreement. Dakuuro (2015) believe that proximity concord, notional concord, subject-verb agreement, pronoun concord, concord within tense and plural inflection concord errors as the common concord errors students of Wa Senior high/ Technical school and Wa Islamic Senior High School commit. Furthermore, Obi (2007) states grammatical concord, proximity concord and pronoun concord as the common concord error learners are likely to make. Similarly, Mireku-Gyimah (2014) analysed errors caused by final year students of a public University in Ghana and found that students committed errors subject-verb agreement errors, plural inflection errors and proximity concord errors. Liu (2005 found that Chinese learners of English committed errors in subject-verb agreement, plural inflections and distance concord. He attributed such errors to the differences that existed between English and the Chinese languages.

2.9.1 Concord with the auxiliary verbs (has/have) within tense

Most concord errors result from the misappropriation of the common verbs 'have' 'do' and 'be'. The students need to be reminded that the verb 'have' appears as 'has' if the subject is a singular noun or if the subject is a third person singular. If the subject is a plural noun or the pronoun I, you, the verb 'have' is used (Uchegbu-Ekwueme & Okongor, 2015).

Again, most student and speakers of English as a second language cannot use the verbs 'has' and 'have' properly. They forget that the verb 'has' is a singular verb which can go only with the third person singular pronouns: he/she/it, and any noun that they can represent. Therefore, any noun or group of nouns which can represent

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these pronouns must go with a singular verb to agree. And the verb 'have' goes with I, you, we, and they and any noun or group of nouns that these pronouns represent.

Quagie (2010) states that the verb 'has' can be used as a possessive verb for third person singular nouns and pronouns, while the verb 'have' can be used as a possessive verb for first person singular and plural(I, we), second person (you), and third person plural (they).

2.9.2 Concord with the relative pronouns/adverbials

Quagie (2010) states that relative pronouns such as who, which, that, whoever, whatever, whichever, and relative adverbial where, when, why etc always pose some challenges to pupils. Indeed, many speakers of English as a Second language (ESL) find it difficult to identify which verb to use after a relative pronoun/adverbial in a sentence. The clue is that whenever the antecedent of a relative/adverbial is singular, a singular verb should be selected or used, and when it is preceded by a plural antecedent, then a plural verb must be used.

2.9.3 Concord within Tense

Another problem area for speakers of English as a second language according to Kirkpatrick (2007) is the confusing with the use of present and past tense and aspects of the present and past tenses in both written and spoken communications. She said it is common to read or hear expressions as: 'I have spoken to him yesterday'. Instead of 'I spoke to him yesterday'. The problem of such speakers according to her is that, they tend to forget the fact that expressions of time adverbials such as: yesterday, last week, last year, two days ago, etc. are past and gone, so they should use the simple past tense form of the verb(s) involved in the conversation.

2.9.4 Subject Verb Agreement

Sekyi –Baidoo Y. (2000) refers to the following unacceptable language structures of concord. Thus subject verb agreement errors. Many of the pupils seem to have difficulties with subject verb agreement even though it is the first rule that pupils learn when they start learning English Language .In phrase where the subject is singular form, there should be no ending and the subject is in plural form, there should be no ending .This basic rule, most of the time is violated. For the wrong use of the verb "live" in the sentence. She live at Navrongo can be explained that the students could not identify the subject of the noun phrase. If they learn to identify the subject, they can easily learn to avoid this type of error.

2.9.5 Plural Inflection Concord Error

Another source of grammatical error is the plural inflection error. Most of these errors occur with words that contain the /-s/ sound at the end of the words, though the word is a singular noun. Pupils make mistakes and the /-s/ ending of those nouns such as economics, measles, politics, athletics etc. for the plural inflection and accordingly assign them plural verbs. The students commit errors like politics have made people corrupt instead of using "has".

2.9.6 Omission of the /-s/ Inflection

There is the possibility for learners of English language to omit the /-s/ of verbs. This might partly be due to the fact that all grammatical persons except the third person singular (he/she) and the personal pronoun (it.) do not take an /-s/ ending. Hourani(2009) states that Arabic learners of English language have problems with the use of the (–s) inflections. The situation is similar in Ghana specifically Navrongo

where the research took place because the learners use English as a second language like the Arabic learners of English.

2.10 Strategies to overcome concord errors

Obi (2007) believes that exposing learners to English language materials can help learners to overcome their difficulties when it comes to the use of concord. She further stated that constant practice will help learners of English as a second language to overcome their concord problems. Also according to Nndwamato (2017) when learners are expose to English language learning material will help to overcome spellings and concord difficulties. He believes reading is the key to helping learners of English to be effective in the language.   Ningsih (2014) states that concord errors among learners are largely due to interlingual   and intralingual interference. He states such measures as knowledge of grammar rules, continuous writing, reading a lot and positive feedback from teachers can be adopted to help learners of English to overcome their errors.

2.10.1 Learners should have knowledge on the rules of concord

It is undeniable fact that an understanding of a language grammar is essential and as it is said vocabulary is the flesh of the language and grammar is the skeleton. According to Qashao (2006) most learners of English a foreign language view the study of grammar a boring and there are frequent outcries about the difficulty of the structures of grammar. He believes learners must learn the grammar of every language so as to avoid error in the writing and speaking.

So the researcher believes concord rules should be properly taught so as to help learners to correct their grammatical errors when writing or speaking.

2.10.2 Reading a Lot

Learners of English language should read a lot. Reading will help students to increase their knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and be informed; to have knowledge of the world as well. Shoebottom(2016) argues that reading help learners to improve their vocabulary, sentence formation and grammar.If they read a lot they will come across how the three types of concord are been used in sentences.Teacher will supply pupils with the school story books to encourage them develop the habit of reading always

2.10.3 Drama and Role Play

Teacher would organise a drama club and encourage them to be part of it .Then within the club, others will carry out the activities of role plays, poetry recitals,and debates. This alone would help them know when to use a plural or singular verb.

2.10.4 Role of the Teacher

Teachers of English should spend more time on the subject-verb agreement of concord when treating the topic. According to Bakuuro (2015) the most confusing rules about concord are those on subject-verb. So the topic should be taught more frequently in class to help students get used to the rules.

2.11 Review of studies in concord errors among learners

Currently there are several studies in Ghana which relate to this present study but most of these studies are outside Kassena/ Nankana Municipal. Azasu (2014) conducted a study on the analysis of concord errors among SDA Senior High School students in Bekwai in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. She used the descriptive survey design with a population of hundred (100) students. Her objectives were; to highlight

the concord errors of students of SDA senior high school; to analyse the sources of concord errors in their communications; to come out with useful suggestions that will help students overcome the difficulties they face in the use of concord. The instrument he used was only essay test, and purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting the respondent. At the end, It was revealed that students do not have good attitude toward the study of grammar, Students were unable to identify noun heads and modification of the nouns phrases was another area where students had little or no knowledge.

One of the differences between Azasu's study and the present study is that the present study used test, interview and observation as the instruments in conduction the study while Azasu only use test. The sample population also differs. However, the present study and his, both have similar objectives and research questions.

Bakuuro (2015) conducted a study on concord among two schools in Wa. Although his study is similar to the present study it was noted that he only focused on the senior high school level. In his study he set out to find out problems with the use of concord in English among two senior high schools in Wa. Like the present study, he used the qualitative research design with a population of seventy (70) students. His objectives were: To find out the difficulties senior high students encounter in studying concord in English, to find out the reason why senior students encounter difficulties in studying concord in English, the feasible ways of helping senior high students to overcome their understanding concord in English.

His objective one is similar to the objective one of the present study and his objective three is also similar to the objective two of the present study.

 At the end of the study his findings were;

1. Mother tongue affects learners in some aspect of concord due to the syntactic difference between the languages.

2. Subject-verb agreement posed a greater threat to students

3. Students are unable to identify the headwords of complex noun

Apart from the studies conducted in Ghana other studies on concord errors have been conducted in Africa. Nnadwamato (2017) conducted a study on analysis of written concord errors among grade 12 first additional language learners in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The overall objectives were to investigate the errors made by grade 12 students. To identify written concord errors which are committed by students, also to evaluate the errors committed by the students. He used experimental design with the population of seven hundred and twenty (720) respondents. He used the mixed methods in conducting the study. He concluded that learners of Vhembe District has a problem in the usage of concord and also recommended that teaching of grammar should be emphasized in the school curriculum and the teaching of concord should be intensified for improved mastering .

Obi (2009) conducted a research on error analysis on the English concord of students in Onitsha urban in Nigeria. Unlike the present study, she chose a sample survey research design. The population was five hundred students from five secondary schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra state. The objective of the study was to find out how competent students of the Anambra state have in relation to concord.

At the end of her study, her findings were that; Concord errors were the commonest grammatical errors committed by the students, learners have little knowledge on the use of concord, English language learnt at the secondary school level did not adequately prepare students for tertiary education.

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Her conclusions were that strong foundation for acquisition of proficiency in English cannot be undermined. She believed there should be a deliberate effort to improve on the standard of teachers of English language.

The difference between Obi's study and the present study is that she uses five hundred students in five schools while the present study uses thirty students in one school. He focuses on senior high whilst the present study is on JHS. The similarities are that both study uses qualitative research.

2.12 Summary

In summary, this chapter deliberated on the various definitions of concord as given by some scholars or authorities on the topic. Types of concord explanations and examples under each of them, rules governing each type of concord such as grammatical, proximity and notional concord is discussed. Also general conclusion about the problems associated with the use of concord among students of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior and the view of other recognized authorities of their previous research work about learning concord. Finally the chapter outlines the various rules governing the use of concord to assist the usage of this research work.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outline the methodology that was employed in conducting the whole study. The discussion is done under the following sub-headings: research design, data sources, population, sample and sampling procedure, method of data analysis, research instruments, validity and reliability, and conclusions

3.1. Research Design

The design of a research is to show the procedures the researcher employs in conducting a research and the condition in which the research data is obtained. Owu-Ewie (2012) observes that a research design is the procedures a researcher employs to achieve accurate and valid answers that answers a research questions. Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance (Kerlinger, 1973).

According to Burns and Grove (2003) research design is a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. Their view is supported by Kothari (2008) who believes research design is a plan, a roadmap and blueprint of investigation conceived in order to obtain answers to research. Thus, research design is a model or action plan upon which the entire study is built. It dictates the manner in which a study is conducted and provides the roadmap of study in terms of the sample, data collection instruments and analysis procedure. The overall purpose of this study was to identify the problems associated with the use of concord in the English language, so the researcher adopted qualitative research design method. Creswell (2008:92) describes qualitative research as 'research that begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a

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theoretical lens and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning ((the importance of assumptions and the worldviews that provide the basis of the design. Lincoln and Guba (1989), cited in Merriam,(2009), refer to this type of research as 'naturalistic inquiry', which implies that participant observational techniques result in a more natural approach than to do those tests and surveys used in the more traditional quantitative approaches.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) suggest that qualitative research offers opportunities for conducting exploratory and descriptive research that uses the context and setting to search for a deeper understanding of the person(s) being studied. Qualitative research is a way of assuming that the researcher gathers, organises and interprets information (usually in words or in pictures), using his or her eyes and ears as filters. It is a way of doing that often involves in- depth interviews and/or observations of humans in natural and social settings (Lichtman, 2006).
Basically, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam, 2009).

3.2. Data Sources

Pupils from Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School in Navrongo were involved in the research. The pupils who were involved in the study were the JHS two pupils. The researcher chose the JHS two pupils for the study because they are in one of the classes she teaches. Again, they had had an experience of the junior high school system for more than one year and had received tutoring in English concord.

3.3 Population

Population is a group of elements or cases whether individuals, objects or events that forms a specific area and to which a researcher intends to generalise the results of the researcher. Agyedu, (1999) states that "population is the complete set of individuals, objects or events having common observable characteristics in which the researcher is interested. A population is also defined as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested, (Blanche,1999). In the view of Blanche, a population is a large pool from which our sampling elements are drawn, and to which we want to generalise our findings. Blanche's conclusion is supported by Kusi. (2012, p. 80) who defines population 'as a group of individuals that the researcher generalises his/her findings'. In addition, Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) believe that population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions.

For this study the population was form two students of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School. The reason for the selection of school was that the researcher noticed that the use of concord in the English Language had been poor, and therefore affected their performances in the Language for so many years now. The researcher observed that students of the school find it difficult to use the appropriate verbs in sentences.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Asamoah (2006) Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group, from which they were selected. Sample frame is all members of the population from which a sample is drawn for research study. Saunders, (2007:15) indicated that the

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size of the sample and the way in which it is selected definitely has implications for the confidence level in the data   analysed and also an extent to which generalisation can be made. The study therefore involved all pupils of Our Lady of Lourdes Junior High School. After identifying the sample frame the researcher also determined the sample size of the study. Thirty students (30) in form two were the sample size used for the study. The sampling was done in such a way that, the researcher considered pupils who were regular to school.

3.5. Research Instrument

The main sources of data used to find answers to the research questions were the objective test of 30, observation and interviews.

3.5.1 Test

The test was conducted by the researcher with help from other teachers. It was conducted under examination conditions and it lasted for 45 minutes. The need to test competence in various concord error types informed the researcher's choice of the objective test as an instrument. Through the objective test strategy, the researcher was able to identify the various categories of concord errors that learners commit. The testing instrument was made in such a way that students had four options to choose from. The allotted time was also enough for learners to complete the test. The objective questions were based on grammatical, proximity, and notional concord. Possible answers were provided. The researcher monitored them to answer the questions immediately they were distributed.

3.5.2 Observation

The researcher employed the observation tool because it offers first-hand information without relying on the report of other which sometimes may be under-

estimated or exaggerated. The researcher observed the pupils objectively as they communicated orally, both in and outside the classroom. In the classroom, she observed the pupils as they engaged in discussion and debates. Outside the classroom, she observed the pupils as they communicated with their fellow pupils as well as teachers.

3.5.3 Interview

The researcher used guided interview to engage the pupils face to face both in and outside the classroom. Outside the classroom, she engaged the pupils in conversation, listening carefully to them and noting down their errors in concord. In the classroom, she used questions and answer techniques to acquaint herself with the degree of pupils error in concord.

Again, the interview sought to find out from pupils whether they enjoyed and understood their English lessons on concord and the challenges they face in their concord usage. Similarly, the interview with the subject gave the researcher the chance to know about what the teachers think about students' inability to perform well in concord test, how this was affecting the pupils performance in the English language and what could be done to curtail this problem. Finally, three (3) English teachers were also interviewed. A guided interview was used.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

To ensure internal validity a pilot test was conducted before the actual test. Also carefully formulated interview questions and a pilot test of the interview were also conducted. Some of the interview questions were revised based on the feedback of the pilot test. This was also done to ensure that all factors that might interfere with data collection were eliminated. This again ensured that all questions related to the

instruments used for data collection were explained by the researcher herself and also to save time and minimise expenses which otherwise would have been incurred.

In the interview process, reliability may be evaluated by restating a question in a slightly different form, at a later stage in the interview (Bush, 2002). This was what the research did. The researcher varied and repeated some of the interview questions to measure consistency of response. Other four teachers of English language perused and approved the objective questions and the interview questions to ensure that the questions met standards and were within the ability of the students.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data. It is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting, conclusions, and supporting decision-making. Test items was conducted for all the participants and the scripts were marked by the researcher.

The researcher used tables to present the data. Form two pupils were chosen as sample and were required to answer objective test questions chosen from a given list under the types of concord. The given objective test were within pupils level and the topics were based on things they knew and understood. Thirty (30) scripts of the pupils were marked by the researcher according to the requirement of the study. The test was written in early third term of the academic calendar. This was the period the researcher who is a teacher in the school was able to get the full complement of the participants. A period of forty- five (45) minutes was allocated for the task .The researcher and other teachers in the school supervised the students to answer the questions. This was to ensure that pupils do independent work, so the researcher had

the true reflection of what is actually happening in the classroom based on the use of concord. At the beginning of the academic year, the researcher conducted an interview of both pupils and teachers. The researcher also observed pupils use of concord during interactions. The next step was the tabulating of the results, under grammatical concord, notional concord and proximity concord.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter has given details of the method used in the conduct of the study: research design, data sources, population, sample and sampling procedure of the study, method of data analysis, and research instrument. The next two chapters present the analysis of the data collected and conclusions drawn.
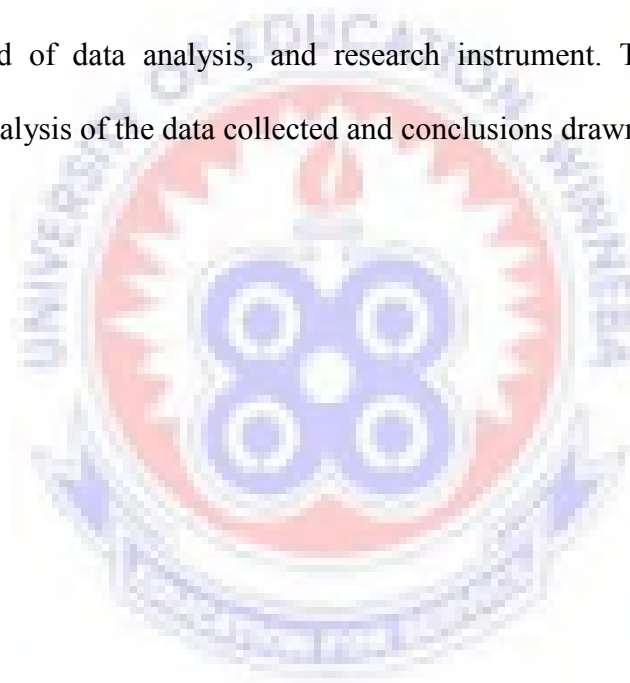
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4. 0. Introduction

This chapter presents the outcome of the research; the results obtained from the field and discusses the findings revealed by the study. The chapter brings out information on teachers of English and pupils of Our Lady of Lourdes JHS. The research probed into teachers' educational background, their teaching experience as regards the teaching of English language, the strategies and techniques they employ when teaching concord as well as their recommendations as to effective ways of teaching concord to learners of English as a second language.

On the part of pupils, the researcher wanted to know some of the reasons why they have problems as regards the study of concord. It was revealed that most of the pupils were not punctual to school and hardly communicate in English during their play time. Again, pupils lack reading materials, and do not visit the community library and as a result find it difficult to understand concord lessons.

The test further reveals that students have problems when it comes to the effective use of concord. From the test, pupils have problems with the correct use of grammatical concord, notional concord and proximity concord.

4.1 Challenges pupils face in their use of concord in the English language

The researcher conducted objective test on concord as one of the instruments to find out whether pupils have challenges with the use of concord. In all, 30 objectives questions were given to the 30 respondents to answer. 10 questions were grammatical concord questions, 10 questions based on notional concord and 10

questions were based on proximity concord

4.1.1 Grammatical Concord

The common type of error made by pupils in the study was grammatical concord. In this case the subject and the verb phrase in the English sentence should agree in number and person. In most northern Ghanaian languages especially Kasem, the subject does not always agree with the verb that follows. A possible explanation why pupils tend to add –s after plural, and omit –s after singular nouns may be due to overgeneralization of the Kasem rule. Pupils overgeneralize the plural by adding the plural –s to the verb that follows and omit the –s in the verb if the subject is singular. Most learners of Our Lady of Lourdes JHS become confused between the third person singular (–s) and the plural (-s). They tend to add --s to the verb if the subject is plural and omit –s if the subject is singular. The tables and graphs below shows the errors students committed during the test.

Table 4. 1 A Summary of grammatical concord Errors

Marks	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
0	6	20
1	8	26.6
2	7	23.3
3	7	23.3
4	1	3.4
5 and above	1	3.4
Total	30	100
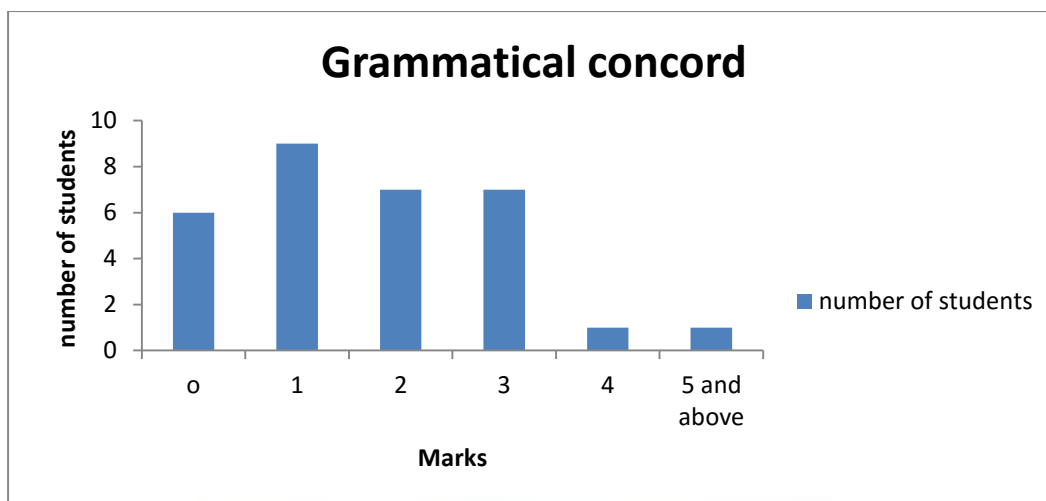
Figure 4.1. Frequency of grammatical concord errors

Generally, from the above graph and table students performed very poorly on grammatical concord because the number of students who scored zero in the test was higher than the number of pupils who scored zero in notional and proximity concord. This is clearly indicated on the graph and the table. Thus table 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3

It was a test conducted so that the subject and verb should agree in number and person. The test was to identify the errors the pupils commit always. The questions were on grammatical concord.

From the analysis, six (6) of the respondents representing 20% scored zero in the test. Nine (9) of the respondents representing 30% scored one(1) while seven(7) respondents representing 23.3% scored two (2) and three (3) marks. One pupils representing 3.4% scored four (4) and one (1) of the respondents scored 5 and above. This shows that learners have difficulties when it comes to the use of grammatical concord.

4.1.2 Proximity Concord

Concord of proximity does not, however, agree with the real subject in the closest noun and of that specific noun, (Crystal, 2004). That is, it denotes agreement

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of the verb with a noun or pronoun that closely precedes it in preference to agreement with the head of the noun phrase. For instance, four singular nouns joined by (either, or, neither, nor, not but, and, or) take a singular verb, and if the subjects are plural, then the verbs must also be plural.

Table 4. 2 A Summary of proximity concord Errors

Mark	No. students	Percentage (%)
0	3	10
1	6	20
2	3	10
3	4	13.4
4	8	26.6
5 and Above	6	20
Total	**30**	**100**
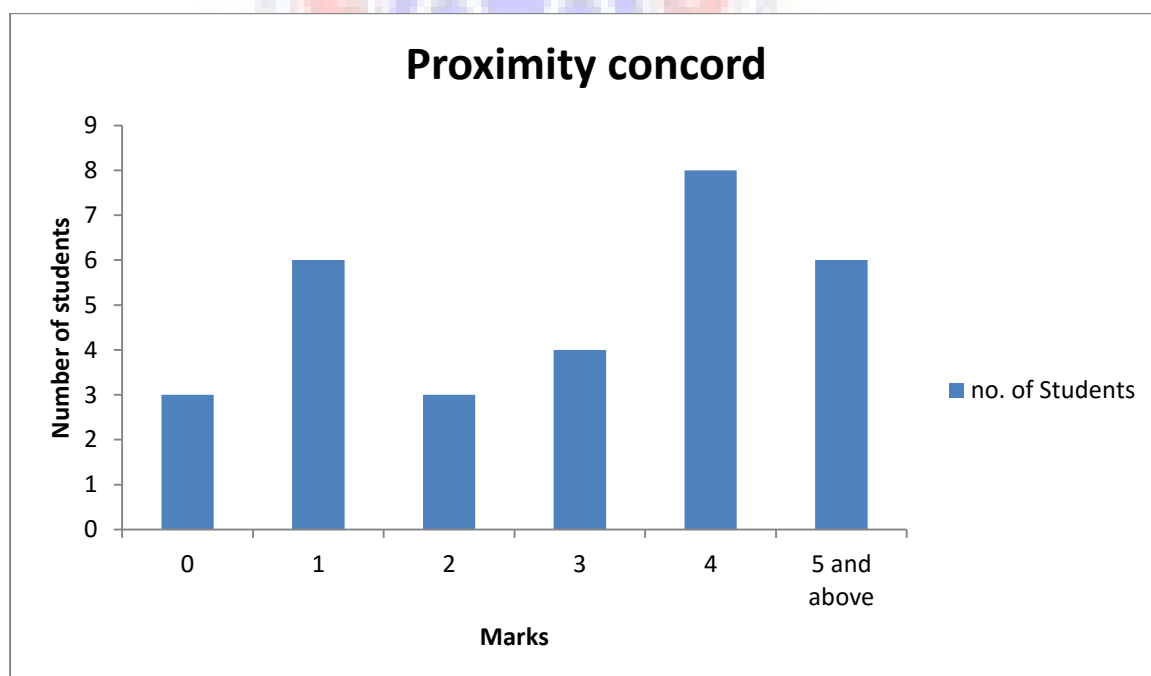
Figure 4.2 Frequency of proximity concord problem

From the table 3 pupils representing 10% scored zero, six (6) pupils

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representing 20% scored one (1) while three (3) pupils representing 10% scored two (2) marks. Four (4) pupils representing 13.4% scored three (3). Eight (8) pupils representing 26.6% scored four (4) marks and six(6) pupils representing 20% scored 5 and above marks.

4.1.3 Notional concord

Notional concord is the agreement of verbs with their subjects and pronouns with their antecedent nouns on the basis of meaning rather than grammatical form. This implies notional concord depends on the speaker's idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker. Notional concord is focusing on the meaning of the whole entity (Crystal, 2004).

Table 4. 3 A Summary of notional concord Errors

Marks	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
0	2	6.7
1	10	33.3
2	6	20
3	4	13.3
4	7	23.3
5 and above	1	3.4
Total	**30**	**100**
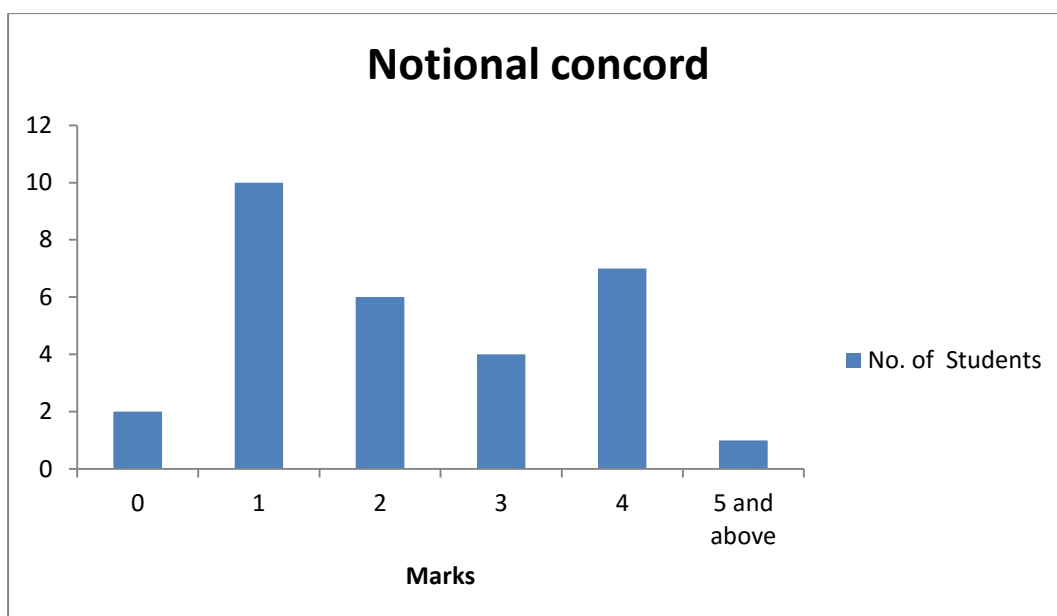
Figure 4.3 Frequency of notional concord problems

From the table two (2) pupils representing 6.7% scored zero while ten (10) pupils representing 33.3% scored one (1). Six (6) pupils representing 20% scored two marks and four (4) pupils representing 13.3% scored three (3) marks. Seven (7) pupils representing 23.3% scored four(4) marks and one student representing 3.4% scored five(5) and above marks.

4.1.4. Summary of the Test

The objective test was divided into three: grammatical concord, proximity concord and notional concord. There were ten (10) questions each for each concord type. On grammatical concord all the thirty pupils scored less than half of the mark. 80% of the pupils scored less than half of the marks while only 20% scored 5 and above marks under Proximity concord. Finally, 96.6% of the pupils scored less than 5 marks under notional concord. This is an indication that pupils have challenges when it comes to the use of all the three types of concord.

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4.2 Interview

Problems pupils face with the use of concord

From the interview conducted for both teachers and learners, it was revealed that learners have a lot of challenges when it comes to the use of concord especially in their written communication. From the data ten (10) participants representing 33% stated that they were regular and punctual at school whilst the remaining twenty (20) forming 67%stated they are not always regular and punctual at school. This is an indication that most of these participants either absent themselves from school or are not punctual at school. For example, when they were asked the reason for absenting themselves or coming to school late, some said, it is because they come from the village and others said they live with their step-mothers who make them sell during market days and in the night and also let them do a lot of work before coming to school. This explains why they perform poorly in their concord exercises as they sometimes miss their English lesson on concord which is taught in the morning. They come to class very exhausted which prevent them from paying attention to what is being taught by the teacher. Some are perpetual late comers, and others are regular absentees.

Another cause of the challenge learners face when it comes to the use of concord is that learners do not communicate regularly using the English language.The results obtained from the data indicate that eight (8) learners forming 27% speak English Language most often in school, 19 learners representing 63% speak Kasem and the three learners which form 15% speak non -standard English. When they were asked why they speak Kasem in school, one learner said that 'I speak Kasem because it is my local language'. Another also has this to say, 'I speak Kasem because all my friends speak it', and another pupil also said, 'I speak Kasem

because if you speak English and you make a mistake they laugh at you'. The fact that these pupils   are fond of speaking their local language and non-standard English explains why they make a lot of concord errors in the attempt to speak Standard English language. This could be attributed to interference of their local language on English language since some grammatical elements in their local language do not exist in English language and vice versa. Lado (1957) states that students learning a second language have interference if the elements in their first language differ from those of the second language.

Reading materials is also another challenge participants said they face. Out of the thirty learners interviewed, only thirteen (13) pupils representing 43% responded that they had reading materials. The remaining seventeen (17) pupils which represent 57% said they did not have reading materials. This means that after school, apart from their notebooks, they do not have any other material to read so as to add up to their knowledge especially with regard to concord. They also hardly visited the community library because four (4) pupils which forms 13% said they visit the library always, ten (10) forming 34% said they go to the library once in a while and the remaining sixteen (16) representing 53% percent said they had never been to the library before. This means that the pupils have not developed the habit of visiting the library to read from other sources that will enhance their knowledge to the extent of improving their usage of concord. Two (2) teachers forming 67% also attributed learners' poor performance in concord to lack of practice on the part of the learners. The teachers identified the speaking of non – standard English and Kasem and as one of the major causes of learners poor performance in concord. Some teachers attributed challenges learners have when it comes to the use of concord to lateness, absenteeism and inattentiveness.

Furthermore, most of the learners stated that they did not enjoy concord lessons, the analysis showed, ten (10) learners representing 33% who gave an affirmative answer to the question whether they enjoyed concord lessons whilst twenty (20) pupils forming 67% said they did understand and do not enjoy their English language lesson in concord. This implies that most of the pupils do not understand and enjoy their English language lesson on concord. For instance, when they were asked the reason for not understanding and enjoying their English language on concord, one said ' I don't understand it because I cannot identify the subject and the verb mostly in sentences. Another student added that 'I also don't understand my English language lesson on concord because I'm also tired when my teacher teaches so I'm not able to pay attention to him'. This affects their concord usage as they did not grasp the concept of concord when taught in class. Some of the teachers interviewed were of the opinion that learners get confused when it comes to the differences between singular verbs and plural verbs. They have difficulties as to when to add the–s inflection of the singular verbs.

Another challenge for learners according to the teachers interviewed was learners' inability to identify the subject when there are several modifiers in front or after it. Nonstandard English actually has a negative influence on their usage of English Language since they turn to have a lot of concord errors whenever they want to express themselves in the latter.

Qualification of the teachers teaching English at the basic level is also a contributing factor to the challenges learners face when it comes to the appropriate use of concord because most of the teachers are not qualified trained English language teachers. Two of the teachers interviewed hold diploma in education while one teacher holds a degree in basic education. This is an indication that they lack the

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competence to teach English language since they were trained earlier as English Language teachers.

Lack of individual attention and examples during concord lessons also contribute greatly to the challenges learners encounter when it comes to the use of concord. This is so because when the learners were asked whether they will like individual attention to be given to them during concord lessons, twenty -two (22) pupils which form 73% are of the view that, if individual attention is given them, they can understand their English Language lesson on concord.

Eight (8) learners representing 27% learners also believe that if more examples are given to them they can easily understand their English Language lesson on concord. The learners also added that if their parents provide them with reading materials and reduce their household chores it would help them to learn well to avoid the concord errors they commit.

In response to the question 'suggest one thing that should be done to improve upon your understanding of concord' one student for example said that, 'I want several examples'. This is a clear indication that pupils understand their English language lesson on concord better when they are given adequate examples for practice, and when teachers give more attention to them individually.

4.3. Appropriate teaching strategies and techniques to overcome the problems associated with the use of concord

From the responds it was concluded that all the teachers use the lecture method because they lacked better understanding of the appropriate method to use when teaching concord. Their response showed that none of them had ever attended in-service training on how to teach English language.

In- service training equips teachers with new and modern methods of teaching

especially grammar, an important aspect of English language. However, the fact that these teachers have not had the chance to attend any in-service training clearly shows that they are not abreast of new and modern methods which will make them assist these pupils to improve upon their usage of concord. This also explains why some of the teachers response that they sometimes do not know when to use the native language in assisting the students to understand the concept of concord.

All the teachers interviewed said they hardly use teaching and learning materials when teaching English language. This is an indication of lack of skills in teaching the English language. It is known that the use of teaching and learning materials in teaching enhances students' understanding which means that if these materials are not used, students will find it extremely difficult to grasp whatever concept is taught since teaching will be done in abstraction.

The researcher suggested discussion method and activity based approaches as the best strategies and techniques which can help pupils to overcome concord problems. When the teachers were asked as to the best strategies and techniques which they believe will be appropriate for teaching the pupils when teaching them, twenty-eight (8) representing 93% think discussion method and approach are the best strategies and techniques which can help them (learners) to overcome concord problems while two (2) of the respondents representing 7% think teacher centered is the appropriate strategies which can be adopted to help learners to overcome their concord problems.

According to the pupils 28 representing 93% said most of the teachers do not give them enough exercises on concord.

4.4. Recommendations on how to improve upon the use of concord in English language

There must be a deliberate effort by teachers and policy makers to improve on the standard of teachers of English language.

Teachers should be sent for regular in-service training, seminars and conferences. The syllabi for such programmes must be structured in such a way that all the aspects of the language which pose great difficulty to pupils be given detailed attention. The training will keep the teachers abreast of the language. The teachers ought to subject themselves to frequent linguistic test on the general principles of English grammar. They should listen to and read good literature. This is because in a language learning situation, adequate exposure to the language leads to efficient and effective use. Teachers must, therefore, be adequately equipped to face the challenges of teaching a dynamic language such as English.

There is also the need for every English teacher to have knowledge about the structure of the pupils mother tongue to be able to identity its structural qualities which might be different from those of the English language. The implication of the above suggestion is that the teacher should have knowledge of the dominant first language spoken in the area where he teaches English to the extent that he would be able to do a simple comparative analysis of the two languages and dictate the possible areas of difficulty and ease in learning the target language.

The learners who took part in the study suggested that, teachers must make effort to be flexible in delivering their lessons. They should give sufficient attention to the teaching of the rules of concord in every grammar period. Structural drills are recommended if pupils are to master the compatibility of words in sentences. The different types of concord should not be taught in one lesson. The topics should be

spread to different lesson periods except where they interlock. Teachers can assess the students' competence by giving a lot of exercises on lexis and structure, as well as essay writing. Essay writing would help students apply the rules of concord which they learnt in isolation. The result of the assessment would guide the teachers in the course of remedial teaching.

Bearing in mind that the success of any learning depends largely on the learner's attitude towards what is learnt, the teachers believe that learners of English as a second language should be encouraged to develop a positive attitude toward the language. A positive attitude would raise a learner's level of motivation and consequently, his attainment of proficiency in the English language. Motivation could come through extensive reading. The onus of making the pupils voracious readers lies with parents and teachers.

However, teachers should be wary of the recommended texts because some of them are replete with grammatical errors. By reading books written by English language experts, students would gradually acquire the rules that guide the syntax of the language. This, would eventually enhance their communicative competence.

The curriculum designers ought to review their selection of ESL learning task and give enough attention to concord. The researcher recommends the inclusion of concord in the syllabi right from primary schools to tertiary institutions. Other difficult areas of the grammar of English caused by the inherent irregular patterns of the language must be given equal attention. This would help to minimize overgeneralization of rules by learners, learning by analogy and wrong hypothization which induce errors.

The teachers who took part in the study think that speaking English language often in school will reduce concord errors among learners others also believe speaking

both their native language and English language can help them to overcome concord errors. The practical solutions the teacher wouid embark on are, organizing them to dramatise a drama, role play, debates, and poetry recital.

4.5. Summary

This chapter discussed the different types of concord errors learners of English commit. The concord error types discussed are grammatical concord, proximity concord and notional concord. The discussion clearly indicated that grammatical concord was the most committed errors by the pupils who took part in the study. This obviously showed that most learners of English have problems when it comes to the correct use of grammatical concord. Other areas where learners also performed poorly were proximity concord and notional concord.

The interview and observation of pupils and teachers also revealed the causes of the concord problems among learners to be as a result inappropriate methods of teaching, poor reading culture among pupils, the learners' attitude in exposing themselves to language materials, lack of language laboratories in schools, the structure difference between L1 of learners and English language, large class size, inadequate professional English language teachers, social networking sites and lack of constant writing practice were identified to be causes of learners difficulties in concord.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the research, the conclusion and recommendation. Recommendations for further studies are presented as well.

5.1 Summary

The study aimed at finding answers to the following research questions:

1. What challenges do students face in their usage of concord in the English language?

2. What appropriate teaching strategies and techniques can overcome the problem?

3. What recommendations are appropriate for the educational authorities to improve upon the use of concord in English language?

5.1.1 Research Question One: What challenges do students face in their usage of concord in the English language?

The study reveals that learners could not speak or write without concord errors. The grammatical concord errors were the highest, followed by notional concord and proximity concord when the test was conducted. The reason is attributed to the difference in structure between English language and languages of northern Ghana, especially Kasem where the research took place.

The observation also showed that learners struggle to write and speak error free sentences. Most the learners the researcher observed make concord errors in their everyday conversation. The reason may be due to poor reading culture among

learners. They really don't read a lot of storybooks but rather interested in viewing films on television.

English teachers are also not enough in the school. Teachers who also teach are not trained to teach the Language. Only one English Language teacher is in the school.

Pupils are not motivated to speak the English so that they can be corrected when errors are committed .Therefore this does not encourage them to speak but are fond of speaking Kasem. The first language is an interference. For example, in Kasem we normally say "Ba tui sikuuli dɛ maama." It means "They come to school everyday." Also "O tui sikuuli dɛ maama," which also means "He comes to school everyday." In this situations, the' S' inflection comes in the second example. Whilst the verb' tui' remains the same in both sentences in Kasem. With this idea, the pupils transfer the 'S´ inflection in Kasem when they are learning the second language.

The correct teaching methodologies are not used to teach concord. Pupils find difficult to grasp the concept of concord. Finally, lack of English text books and story books in the school. The few that are there, there is no library to keep them so that the teachers could encourage them to read often.

5.1.2 Research Question Two: What appropriate teaching strategies and techniques can overcome the problem?

From the analysis of the data it was realized that most teachers use the lecture method because they lack understanding as to how to teach concord. It was revealed that none of them attended in-service training to open up their minds as to how to teach concord better. Teachers were also interviewed and it was clearly mentioned that they hardly use teaching and learning materials when teaching English Language.

This would help the students grasp the concept of concord very well when they are learning it.

5.1.3 Research Question Three: what recommendations are appropriate for the educational authorities to improve upon the use of concord in English language?

The recommendations are that the headteachers should organised in-service training, seminars and conferences should be organized to update the knowledge of teachers teaching English specifically concord. He or she could liase with Ghana Education Service and Non Governmental Organisations for funds in order to carry out such an activity. Also it was suggested teachers ought to subject themselves to frequent linguistics test during an in-service training on the general principles of English grammar. Every English teacher should have knowledge about the structure of the pupils mother tongue to be able to identify its structural qualities which might be different from English Language. Teachers are also to give much attention to the teaching of the rules of concord in every grammar lesson.

Different types of concord should be taught in one lesson. Lots of exercises and essay writing should be conducted almost all the time. Pupils should have time to read a lot of books which would help them acquire the rules that guide the syntax of the language which eventually enhance their communicative competence. Teachers also recommended that learners should speak English language frequently to enable them minimize the concord errors they commit orally and in a written form.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations have been made. Recommendations have been made for further study also.

5.2.1 Recommendations based on the research findings

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Learners should be regular at school, and to make sure that English as a medium of communication is used both in the classroom and in the school premises.

2. Teachers should teach pupils the appropriate strategies which will facilitate language learning as their first language can play a vital role in learning the second language.

3. Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service should make available in the basic schools adequate reading materials that aids in English Language teaching. This would rekindle the interest of pupils in the study of the language. In this regard supplementary readers must be made available for use by pupils so that as they read the books they can acquire more vocabulary that can be used in communication.

4. Reading a lot of English Language books will also help the learners to understand concord better so that they can avoid errors in their daily communications. The few library books that are in the school should also be used by pupils. Some teachers are of the view that when the pupils use the text books they will be torn, so they don't allow the pupils to use the books. This should be stopped. Teachers should be made to understand that the textbooks belong to the pupils so that could learn on their own. This should be emphasized by headteacher if possible the municipal director.. The headteacher should let students be aware that whoever receives government property thus the textbook and brings it back torn would pay for it.

5. However, teachers should be encouraged to use the child centered approach in their teaching so that children will be encouraged to explore the use of language in friendly environment.

6. Teachers who are made to teach at the basic schools should also be equipped to teach and lay a good foundation in the language for future learning of the language.

7. A lot of exercises and test on concord should be conducted for pupils almost all the time, so that they will not forget the rules governing concord.

8. The principle of substitution method can also be used to teach concord.

9. Teachers who are professionally trained or competent in the language who actually majored in the English Language should be allowed to teach at the basic level.

5.2. 2 Recommendation for further research

When I was conducting the test, I realized that the pupils encountered or committed spelling errors, punctuation errors, and tense errors. I therefore recommend that other researches could be conducted on these areas. In addition to the above, the research was done in only one school in the Kassena-Nankana Municipality. I recommend that studies will be carried out in all the schools in the municipality, and also in Ghana as a whole to be able to generalize the findings for all pupils in Ghana.

5.3 Conclusions

It is noticed from the data collected for this study that learners' inability to effectively use concord both written and oral is due to several factors. Some of these factors are: lack of skilled teachers of English; lack of English textbooks; and poor

reading culture among learners. Therefore it is important to train more English teachers in addition to the provision of textbooks to enhance teaching and learning of concord. The correct teaching methodologies should be used to teach concord.

If all the recommendations are taken into considerations, the teaching and learning of concord will be enjoyable.

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APPENDIX A

OUR LADY OF LOURDES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

NAME OF STUDENT: Vida Adduro

CLASS: J.H.S. Form Two (2)

GENDER: Female

AGE: 14 Years .... TIME: 40 MIN

Fill in the appropriate answer in the space given. Thus the answers in brackets.

1. Julians's car _____break_____ down easily. (breaking, broken, break, breaks).

2. Every morning Ama and Osuihes _____see_____ the dentist before going to school. (seeing, seen, sees see).

3. The teachers _____taught_____ often. (teaching, taught, teaches, teach).

4. Ama and Efua _____goes_____ to the market (going, gone, goes, go).

5. The pupils _____played_____ football (playing, played, plays, play).

6. Oforiwa _____sang_____ at school (singing, sang, sings, sing).

7. Our class _____have_____ fifty students (having, is, have, has).

8. Where _____are_____ the bunch of keys (were, would, are, is).

9. The two guests have arrived but neither _____were_____ welcome (were, would, is, are).

10. A flock of sheep _____were_____ grazing on the field (were, have, is, are).

11. Ghana _____having_____ a powerful army. (having, is, have, has).

12. Only one of the new houses _____have_____ a garage. (having, is, has, have).

13. One of the thieves _____have_____ been arrested. (were, was, have, has).

14. Ama, as well as Jane _____like_____ rice. (liked, liking, like, likes).

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15. Neither the farmer nor the labourers ___wasn't___ not happy about the officers' attitude. (weren't, wasn't, is, are).

16. Neither the boy nor the girls ___likes___ the oranges. (liked, liking, likes, like).

17. Not only the headmaster but also his wife ___were___ present at the meeting. (aren't, were, are, is).

18. Neither the boy nor his father ___washave___ eaten (were, is, have, has)

19. Either the students or the teacher ___was___ to be present. (were, was, have, has)

20. Neither the nurses nor the doctor ___having___ on strike (having, were, are, is)

21. Awal and Maruf ___sells___ banana. (sells, sell, selling, solding)

22. Athletics ___are___ good for the body (were, are, is, weren't).

23. The thief ___stealing___ from his uncle's store. (steal, steals, stealing, stolen)

24. Banku and Okro stew ___are___ my favourite (were, is, are, aren't).

25. A dog and a cat ___was___ Seldom friends. (was, had, is, are)

26. The vice president and chairman of the police council ___having___ travelled. (having, haved, have, has).

27. Everyone ___have___ to be blamed. (were, have, are, is).

28. The teachers ___eating___ mangoes everyday. (eating, eats, eat, eaten)

29. The teacher, accompanied by the students ___haved___ arrived. (having, haved, have, has)

30. The president, as well as his vice president ___aren't___ in Accra (were, are, is, aren't).

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OUR LADY OF LOURDES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

NAME OF STUDENT: ....

CLASS: ....

GENDER: ....

AGE: ....TIME: 40 MIN

Fill in the appropriate answer in the space given. Thus the answers in brackets.

1. Juliana's car .... down easily. (break up, broken, break, breaks)

2. Every morning Ama and Otsibea .... the dentist before going to school (seeing, seen, sees, see).

3. The teachers .... often. (teaching, taught, teaches, teach).

4. Ama and Efua .... to the market (going, gone, goes, go).

5. The pupils .... football (playing, played, plays, play).

6. Otsiriwa .... at school (singing, sang, sings, sing).

7. Our class .... fifty students (having, is, have, has).

8. Where .... the bunch of keys (were, would, are, is).

9. The two guests have arrived but neither .... welcome (were, would, is, are).

10. A flock of sheep .... grazing on the field (were, have, is, are).

11. China .... a powerful army. (having, is, have, has). «

12. Only one of the new houses .... a garage (having, is, very have).

13. One of the thieves .... been arrested. (were, was, have, has).

14. Ama, as well as Jane .... rice. (liked, liking, like, likes).

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15. Neither the farmer nor the labourers __weren't__ not happy about the officers' attitude. (weren't, wasn't, is, are).

16. Neither the boy nor the girls __likes__ the oranges. (liked, liking, likes, like).

17. Not only the headmaster but also his wife __weren't__ present at the meeting. (aren't, were, are, is).

18. Neither the boy nor his father __has__ eaten (were, is, have, has)

19. Either the students or the teacher __has__ to be present (were, was, have, has)

20. Neither the nurses nor the doctor __were__ on strike (having, were, are, is).

21. Awal and Maruf __sells__ banana. (sells, sell, selling, adding)

22. Athletics __were__ good for the body (were, are, is, weren't).

23. The thief __stolen__ from his uncle's store. (steal, steals, stealing, stolen)

24. Banku and Okro stew __were__ my favourite (were, is, are, aren't).

25. A dog and a cat __were__ seldom friends. (was, had, is, are)

26. The vice president and chairman of the police council __have__ travelled. (having, haven, have, has).

27. Everyone __were__ to be burned. (were, have, are, is).

28. The teachers __eat__ mangoes everyday. (eating, eats, eat, eaten)

29. The teacher, accompanied by the students __has__ arrived. (having, haved, have, has)

30. The president, as well as his vice president __were__ in Accra (were, are, is, aren't).

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. i. Are you regular and punctual at school?

   ii. If no why?

   …………………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………………

2. What language do you speak most in school?

   Standard English [ ]   Kasem [ ]   Non-standard English [ ]

3. Do you have reading materials?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

4. How often do you visit the community library?

   Always [ ]   once a while [ ]

5. Were you taught the roles of concord.   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

6. Do you understand and enjoy your concord lessons?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   ii. Give reasons for your answers above

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Suggest one thing that should be done to improve upon your understand of

   concord lessons

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

8. Do you use mobile phones   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

1. What is your professional qualification?

   Unprofessional teacher ☐   Cert A' ☐   Diploma ☐

2. For how long have you been teaching?

   ………………………………………………………………………………….

3. Have you attended any in-service training course on teaching grammar

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. What language do you use as a medium of instruction?

   English ☐   Kasem ☐

5. Which method do you use in teaching concord?

   i. Discussion ☐   ii. Demonstration ☐   iii. Lecture ☐

6. What are some of the challenges you face in class as regards to teaching of concord?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………..

7. i. What do you think is /are responsible for studies poor performance in concord?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   ii. What do you think should be done to improve the situation?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

8. i. Do you think a good knowledge in concord will help students do well in

English   Yes   ☐   No   ☐

   iii.   Give reasons for your answer

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………….

9. i. Do you use teaching and learning materials in your concord lessons?

Yes ☐   No ☐

ii. Give reasons for your answer above………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

10. What do you think are the appropriate strategies and techniques that can

overcome the problem of concord?

……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………..

11. What are some of the recommendation or suggestions as to how to solve the

problem of the use of concord among students.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

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